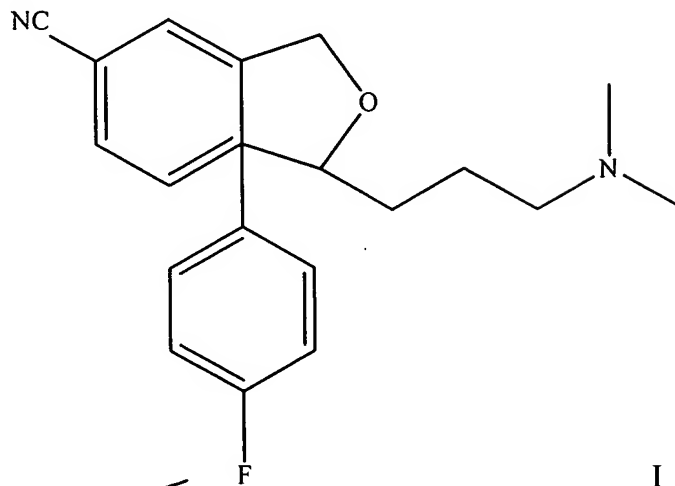
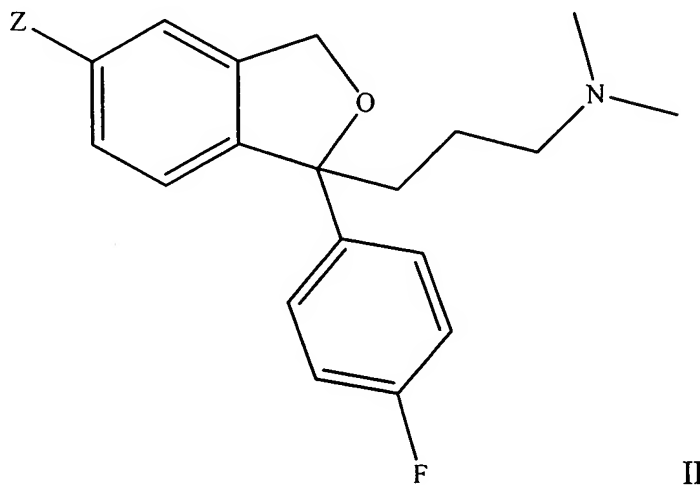


**ABSTRACT**

A process for the preparation of citalopram of formula (I)



in which a compound of formula (II)



wherein Z is iodo, bromo, chloro or  $\text{CF}_3\text{-(CF}_2\text{)}_n\text{-SO}_2\text{-O-}$  n being 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8, is subjected to a cyanide exchange reaction in which the group Z is exchanged with cyanide by reaction with a cyanide source; the resultant crude citalopram product is optionally subjected to some initial purification and the crude citalopram base is subsequently subjected to a film

distillation process; the resulting citalopram product is then optionally further purified and worked up and isolated as the base or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

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